

National Position Paper of Iceland
Prepared for
Prague Atlantic Student Summit
NATO Simulation
November 20-23, 2002

The Icelandic government

- Restating its commitment to the preservation and promotion of the fundamental values of democracy, freedom and security for every citizen
- Reaffirming its dedication to the peaceful co-operation, solidarity and mutual respect of all nations
- Resolving to participate actively in furthering the goals and objectives of the North Atlantic Treaty Association and to contribute to stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area to the best of its abilities,

Conveys the following.

I. General statement

Although the threats and challenges faced by the modern world have to some extent taken on new form and figure, the essential means of neutralizing them still remains the close and concerted consultation and co-operation of independent states, resolved to guarantee their citizens and the citizens and the citizens of their partner states the fundamental values of democracy, freedom and security.

The North Atlantic Treaty Association is the only comprehensive political-military framework for addressing the threats and challenges of the 21st century to stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. In our view, NATO therefore remains the key to stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic Area- a key that the Member States must resolve to strengthen and reinforce to the best of their abilities, by coordinating their efforts and steadily increasing the quality and efficiency of their contributions.

II. Roles and missions of NATO in the 21st century

The constantly changing landscape of political and strategic relations among states demands the pro-active and progressive definition and application of the concepts of stability and security. The strength and endurance of the alliance will hinge on its ability to constantly revalue and adapt to an ever changing security environment and its capacity to employ new means and methods of protecting and promoting its members' fundamental values by active co-operation and coordinated efforts.

The fall of the Berlin wall and the ensuing thaw and later building of friendships in East-West relations added new dimensions to the role and mission of the alliance. Political, economic, and environmental elements of security and stability are taking on increased importance. Within NATO this has resulted in extensive cooperation and partnership with other organizations as well as new states, and furthermore in a range of new responsibilities and projects, which reflect the Member States commitment to preserve peace and stability, not only with regard to immediate threats but also to more long-term and chronic sources of instability, such as the disintegration of

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states. After September 11th, the alliance and the Member States have once again had to adapt to changing realities and invent means to combat new threats and challenges, the most recent being the threat posed by terrorist groups that pursue unacceptable objectives by methods that cause death and destruction on a massive scale, possibly by acquiring and deploying weapons of mass destruction against civilian targets. However, other challenges remain as well and must not be underestimated, but must be analyzed in context and addressed in a holistic manner.

The 21st century will call for an integrated and flexible framework making it possible for the Member States to form a strong and lasting coalition that can be effectively employed to neutralize threats and cope with challenges. NATO should form the basis for collective security of its Members in the widest sense, including both proactive and re-active strategies. The role and mission of NATO should therefore be to

- Provide a framework for active dialogue and information exchange between its Member States as well as between the Member States and partner states, in particular Russia, but also Ukraine, the Caucasus and states belonging to the Mediterranean group, and others if possible.
- Provide the knowledge, experience and insight to correctly analyze threats and propose strategies to cope with them, both on the political and military level.
- Provide a platform for joint planning and training of forces.
- Provide a center for the political and military coordination of efforts and actions
- Provide the command structure and capabilities to effectively execute efforts and secure stability.

To be able to effectively realize those aims the alliance must welcome new states and strengthen existing partnerships, as well as forming new ones. Iceland therefore supports the entry of aspirant states in Eastern- Europe.

III. Political Affairs

Threats and Challenges

An effective strategy against threats and challenges to security and stability calls for a constant reevaluation and adaptation to changing realities. When considering the current situation certain main factors may be indicated, in particular the threat posed by the terrorist acts of stateless actors, the possible proliferation and insecurity of weapons of mass destruction and the continuing instability within many states due to political and economic transformations or ethnic strife.

Although terrorism was a major cause of concern during the last century it has taken on a new form and face after September 11th. Whereas the aim of traditional terrorist groups mainly concerned maximum publicity with minor civilian casualties, the aims of traditional and capabilities of some current terrorist groups seems to be to maximize casualties and causing widespread fear and instability. Such groups can be small in numbers, highly mobile and technologically advanced and may seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear or chemical weapons, and more importantly, have the resolve to deploy them against civilian populations, causing large scale death and destruction. Other possible means of attack may include assaults on computer and information systems, as well as on infrastructure and transport systems.

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The threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has grown considerably over the last years and the containment of such weapons will remain one of the main concerns of the alliance, both as regards nuclear and chemical means of warfare. The possibility that lawless actors, such as terrorists groups, or failed states may acquire such weapons is particularly worrisome and actions must be taken to hinder their proliferation and secure existing supplies of both weapons and materials.

It is also important to keep in mind that although the threat of nuclear weapons has dominated the field, due respect must also be paid to the growing danger of biological and chemical weapons, especially since such weapons may be easily hidden, transported and deployed against civilian populations.

Further worry may also be posed by the inadequate maintenance and lack of reform of systems of control and production of nuclear energy.

Threats posed by domestic instability and the possible disintegration of states due to major political and economic transitions or ethnic strife are likely to remain one major cause for concern. Although such events often do not impose an immediate threat to Member States, the impact of such conflict can spill over into the international sphere and be gravely felt within the Member States, in particular in the form of an increased pressure on the foundations of society due to migration, rising numbers of asylum seekers and smuggling, in particular of humans, drugs, and weapons. Furthermore, humanitarian and human rights aspects may also place a responsibility on the Member States to act in case of conflict or strife.

Other areas of concern to any alliance concerned with preserving security and stability include actions in cases of natural disasters or catastrophes of various nature.

NATO's role in neutralizing threats and coping with challenges of the 21st century

NATO's most important contribution to stability and security is its comprehensive institutional political-military framework, which provides the basis for an active dialogue and analysis of threats and challenges, a platform for joint planning and training, a center for crisis management and coordination of efforts, as well as the structure and capabilities to effectively execute them.

As regards the threat of terrorism, NATO should focus on providing a platform for dialogue and information exchange to facilitate informed policy and decision-making, as well as coordinating, organizing and executing efforts to combat the operation of terrorist groups. It is important that such efforts are discussed and decided upon in international forums and have the legitimacy and public support needed.

As regards the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, NATO should work towards effectively securing arsenals of nuclear weapons, both within its Member States and, more importantly, within partner countries that are under strain to maintain adequate levels of security.

As regards domestic instability and the possible disintegration of states, NATO should seek to develop close ties with other organizations which are concerned with preventive measures as

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well as peace- making and peace- keeping, such as OSCE and various UN institutions. In certain cases NATO can and should be ready to answer request for stabilizing and peace- keeping forces, preferable from legitimate international bodies or the respective state itself. Furthermore, NATO should also hold open the possibility of providing forces in cases of emergency stemming for instance from natural disasters or catastrophes.

Impact on relations with EU and UN

The European Capability Action Plan is a welcomed initiative and will strengthen and revitalize the alliance, provided that it will be closely coordinated with NATO's capability initiatives and that due respect is paid to the inter-operability of forces. It is important that although the European Member States increase their cooperation in this field, it will not weaken the transatlantic link, which is the basis of stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. The importance of this cannot be overstated and the modalities of such cooperation must be agreed upon by the two organizations as soon as possible. Furthermore, the interest of the European Member States that are not members of the EU must be respected and their voice provided a forum within the new European structures.

Impact of taking action out of area

Although the geographical aspect of security has to an increasing degree become irrelevant, or at least been broadened considerably, each and every decision involving actions out-of-area must be carefully considered and planned. The legitimacy of action must be established, preferably by a mandate from the Security Council, and should invariably be undertaken in cooperation with other competent institutions that may possess knowledge and experience that NATO-led forces may lack, for instance in the field of civil institutional reconstruction. It should always be kept in mind that such action does often impose long-term and extensive commitments and responsibilities on the acting parties, which should not be underestimated.

IV. Defence Planning

NATO capabilities in relations to the new threats

Because of the security environment in the past, NATO has been well equipped to deal with possible risks and conflicts. Traditional warfare plus reliance on nuclear deterrence has provided NATO with enough credibility thereby minimizing the risk of direct conflict with other states. But with new threats, especially terrorist organizations, we must consider whether changes are needed. Clearly in order to function properly, NATO cannot rely exclusively on US capabilities. But the question of increased expenditure on defense is and should remain in the hands of nation states.

Strategies for enhancing/improving capabilities, including through specialization

It has been stated that the question of increased and/or improved capabilities cannot be discussed without addressing the issue of defense expenditure. The dominance of the US will continue for many years despite actions taken to establish the EU Rapid Reaction Force. Although Iceland does not have an army we have been making increasing efforts to participate in peacekeeping, for example, through air-traffic control. It is without doubt one of the most important factors of NATO is that each nation, small though it may be, can donate to our common defense.

Military reform and the new threats

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As a nation without a military, Iceland is hardly in the position to discuss military reform as such. It is however a valid question whether NATO should reduce its nuclear arsenal even more. The importance of nuclear weapons is not questioned, only its usefulness against new threats.

Coordination between EU Rapid Reaction Force and NATO Response Force

With increasing support for the EU Rapid Reaction Force, concerns have risen among the NATO nations that are not a part of the EU. It is vitally important that the EU and NATO establish a clear route of communications. The EU Force should focus on peacekeeping and actions within its own territory, while the NATO force should be highly mobile, thereby enabling it to take actions out of area. Furthermore we must avoid the possibility that the NATO force acts as a part of the EU force. A clear distinction has to be made between the two although that does not imply they cannot cooperate.